

Lucky Shoe Farm

Regenerative Agriculture and Habitat Restoration Practicum

Supervisor:	Anna Casey, farm co-owner
Salary:	\$15 per hour (or more DOE), 24 hours/week <u>Exchange</u> - Housing will be provided with a private room and bathroom, wifi and access to either a private or shared kitchen. In spring and fall, a small amount of work trade will be asked in exchange for housing, and in summer housing will be included in the position.
Period of Employment:	Flexible to fit student availability: April through September at the longest, June 1st through August 26th at the shortest. During June 21, 2022 – August 26, 2022: 3 days per week
Participation Requirements:	Living in the Methow Valley for the summer Enrollment in UEPP 471 Campus Sustainability Planning Studio course Meets 2 days per week (3 credits) Optional internship credits are available but not required (up to 8 credits)

Overview

We are raising grass-fed sheep using rotational grazing systems as part of a larger program to rebuild soil and reintroduce diverse native habitat buffers to our 40-acre farm. We are using diverse cover-cropping, rotational grazing, and water management to work on improving conditions both in the soil and for the animals.

We are also preparing sites for native plant reintroduction, with a goal of returning 7 acres of land to native habitat in the next few years. These sites are chosen for their value as riparian zones or wildlife movement corridors.

We are a small family, two adults and our six-year-old kiddo. Our backgrounds are varied, but we bring experience from farm, habitat restoration and biology jobs. The farm is also home to meat-wool sheep, a horse, a working livestock guardian dog, a herding dog and free-range chickens.

Responsibilities

Primary focus areas include: caring for and rotating pasture for sheep, moving and monitoring irrigation, and working on habitat restoration sites.

In April we will be supporting our ewes in lambing, preparing our previously cover-cropped fields to be planted into perennial pasture, and assembling irrigation equipment. Depending on results from soil testing, we may apply manure or minerals as natural fertilizer to select areas of the farm. In May, pasture and cover crops will be planted, irrigation will be turned on and sheep will begin rotational grazing. In early June, we will cut hay and alfalfa.

From mid-June to Early August, sheep will continue to graze on rotating pasture and irrigation will be moved daily. **From mid-June to the end of July, our family also fishes commercially in Alaska. We will be gone from the farm for these 6 weeks, and this will be an opportunity for you to take a leadership role, oversee animal and irrigation management, and possibly train a second student to assist in farm tasks.**

In August, we will wean lambs and possibly take a second cutting of hay and alfalfa. Animals will continue to rotational graze until snow falls. Throughout the seasons, we will prepare sites or tend to replanted areas, keep an eye on animal health and adjust our grazing and watering cycles to support the pastures.

Depending on the duration of your work at Lucky Shoe, you may be able to help with a mix of the above tasks. **Your most critical jobs will be moving animals on rotating pasture one to two times a week, and moving irrigation equipment daily.** We need a strong commitment for engagement during the time that we will be away from mid-June until August 1, and believe we can provide training and information to support this time of unsupervised farm management to be empowering and successful. The earlier you can arrive (before June 1) the more training and skills you can build to enable you to work confidently on your own.

We may have an opportunity for a second student participating in the Sustainability Pathways program for the summer only (beginning June 21), so people interested are encouraged to be in touch to discuss possibilities around dates. If there were two students sharing this position, the 20ish hrs/week would be split.

Qualifications and Experience

Prior experience is not required. Willingness to work outside in heat and possibly smoke is a requirement, and physical strength is needed. It is important to be willing to learn new skills, ask for help, and navigate the unexpected- whether it is a mechanical breakdown or an injured animal. In June and July, you will be working unsupervised, and will be in charge of making sure the animals are well and the water is hitting the ground. **You must be able to manage the unexpected by trouble shooting problems yourself, calling on us for help, or reaching out to other local resources who we refer you to.**

Educational/Professional Benefits

Depending on your interests, skills can be built in the following areas:

Soil management: Testing soil, learning about soil supplementation options, selective cover cropping, equipment uses and seedbed preparation.

Habitat Restoration: Plant selection, site preparation, traditional/indigenous food cultivation and land management practices. Creating specific habitats for selected wild species.

Animal husbandry: Caring for horses, sheep and the working livestock guardian dog.

Mechanics and farm implement use: Using and helping with maintenance of the tractor, truck, hay baler and swather, tractor implements and irrigation equipment.

Students interested in ecological restoration, farming and food systems are encouraged to apply. Spring work hours are flexible, and online courses through WWU may also be taken during Spring quarter.

Find more information about Sustainability Pathways Fellowships at:

<https://sustain.wwu.edu/pathways>

Please direct all questions to Sustainability Pathways Director, Joshua Porter at:

Joshua.Porter@wwu.edu